

CHECKING
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
SERVICE STANDARD

Definition

Checking is the service of contacting older persons at their residence to make sure that they are well and safe. This activity may also serve to provide psychological reassurance to an older person who is alone and in need of personal contact from another individual.

Eligible Population

Checking services are targeted to persons 60 years of age or older who are frail, have disabilities, or who are at risk of institutional placement. Priority shall be given to older persons who are in the greatest social and economic need and/or are residing in rural or geographically isolated areas, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals.¹

Service Delivery Elements

Service Specific Assessment:

A service specific assessment using Virginia Service-Quick Form must be performed on each potential client to determine:

- Whether the person meets the criteria specified in eligible population;
- What the person's service specific needs are;
- What level of priority for service delivery the person meets
- Federal Poverty should be determined and documented. The Federal Poverty/VDA form may be used.
- Any fee for service charge to the client shall be determined by the applicable sliding fee scale.

Agencies providing Checking Services must perform the following:

Telephone or visit an older person in order to provide comfort or help. May include "Lifeline" or other automated checking/reassurance services.

Administrative Elements

Staff Qualifications:

- **Knowledge:** staff shall have an awareness of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging; community resources and public benefits eligibility requirements.
- **Skills:** staff should have skills in establishing and sustaining interpersonal relationships and problem solving.
- **Ability:** staff should have ability to communicate with persons with different socio-economic backgrounds and to work independently.

¹ Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended, Section 306(a)(5)(A)(i)

Job Description:

For each paid and volunteer position funded by Title III of the Older Americans Act, an Area Agency on Aging shall maintain:

- A current and complete job description which shall cover the scope of each position-holder's duties and responsibilities and which shall be updated as often as required, and
- Current description of the minimum entry-level standard of performance for each job.

Units of Service:

Units of service must be reported in AIM for each client receiving the service. Service units can be reported by client on a daily basis, but not aggregated summarized more than beyond one calendar month.

- Contacts (Telephone calls or visits to clients)
- Persons Served (Unduplicated)

Program Reports:

- Aging Monthly Report (AMR) to VDA by the twelfth (12th) of the following month. If the area agency on aging provides this service, this report must be updated and submitted even if no expenditures or units of service occurred.
- AIM client level data transmitted by the last day of the following month.

Consumer Contributions/Program Income:

There must be a written policy on handling of Client Program Income (CPI) and other gratuities and donations.

- Cost Sharing/Fee for Service: An Area Agency is permitted to implement cost sharing/fee for service for recipients of this service.²
- And/Or
- Voluntary Contributions: Voluntary contributions shall be allowed and may be solicited for this service provided the method of solicitation is non-coercive.³

Quality Assurance

Criminal Background Checks:

- VDA strongly recommends that the agency and its contractors protect their vulnerable older clients by conducting criminal background checks for staff providing any service where they go to or into a client's home.

² Ibid., Section 315(a)

³ Ibid., Section 315(b)

Staff Training:

- **(Initial)** In-depth orientation on agency policies and procedures, client rights, community characteristics and resources, and procedures for conducting the allowable activities under this service.
- **(Ongoing)** At least annual in-service training, the content of which to be based on the need for professional growth and upgrading of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Supervision/Case Review:

Consultation, supervision, and caseload review shall be available to all staff providing the service.

Program Evaluation:

The area agency on aging should conduct a regular systematic analysis of the persons served and the impact of the service. Service providers shall be monitored annually.

Client Records:

- Virginia Service – Quick Form (At a minimum, this form must be updated annually).
- Federal Poverty Documentation and Fee for Service calculation must be part of the client record. Federal Poverty/VDA Sliding Fee Scale form may be used.
- Service Documentation